



Civic News



The official newsletter of East Grinstead Town Council

Ginnie is new mayor



A packed Council Chamber saw Cllr Ginnie Waddingham receive the mayoral chain at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 12 May. She was nominated for the role of East Grinstead's first citizen by Cllr Margaret Collins who commended Ginnie for her "tireless work" on behalf of the community, adding that she would make "an excellent ambassador" for the town. Ginnie said she would be concentrating on "the positives" during her year in office, and welcomed the arrival of the Bluebell Railway,

which she called an event of "enormous significance", to East Grinstead, and one which would enhance its identity as an "historic, quality and distinctive market town".

Her chosen charity for the year will be Age Concern, which will be moving to a new home in the renovated and extended Parish Halls. "Kitting-out the building will not come cheap, so during my year I hope local businesses and individuals may consider helping, if not in cash, then in kind, providing the specialist new items Age Concern will need to make this building somewhere we would all love to be."

* *OUTGOING* mayor Ian Dixon gave a cheque for £4,700 to his chosen charity, the Greenstede Talking News, and one for £500 to the Chatter Box Club which gives speech therapy to stroke victims at the QVH hospital.

YOUTH SPORTS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

EAST Grinstead Town Council has allocated an annual budget of £2,000 to facilitate Youth Sports Development Grants to local sports clubs. The purpose is to encourage clubs to provide access to all young people, to promote success in youth sports and to promote participation and excellence. In particular Members wish to encourage clubs to promote initiatives that might enhance take-up by young people in sports generally. The maximum grant to any club or organisation will be £500 and grants are not payable to individuals. A copy of the Council's approved grants criteria and the official application form can be obtained on request from the Council Offices, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT.

Generation X a hit

A project to bring together the town's youngsters and old folk proved a resounding success when months of hard work was shown to a packed audience at Chequer Mead. The project - named Generation X - was coordinated by the Escapade Theatre Company under artistic director Deborah Ellis for youngsters from East Grinstead, Burgess Hill and Hassocks. Among them was a team of media students from Sackville school who have been regularly visiting some of the town's older residents to talk about their memories and experiences for a documentary.

"When you talk to people about real life experiences it really brings history to life," said Deborah, "and I think we all came away with a renewed respect for the older generation and for the hardships they faced living through the First and Second World Wars."

Mayor Ginnie Waddingham called the show "absolutely amazing" and praised the standard of performance achieved by the youngsters.



Cllr Margaret Collins agreed, saying the project should now be given a wider audience across the county. "It was brilliant," she said. "I was thrilled at how successful it was."

*Photo: courtesy of the East Grinstead Courier

News in Brief

Committee chairmen

CLLR Paul Johnson has been reappointed as chairman of the Planning committee, and Cllr James Baldwin will resume his duties as chairman of Finance and General Purposes. Cllr Rob Musk will be the new chairman of the Leisure and Tourism committee, while Cllr Bob Mainstone will lead Public Services.

Mayor to fight for maternity services

NEW Mayor Ginnie Waddingham will represent East Grinstead Town Council on the committee reviewing health care provision in the north east sector of West Sussex under chairman Sir Graeme Catto. The Town Council has also taken steps to ensure it is represented at public meetings in the area which have been organised by the Primary Care Trust. Ginnie said: "EGTC will continue to emphasise the importance of accessible maternity and obstetric provision within the county, and to press for the retention of these services at the Princess Royal hospital in Haywards Heath."

Summer stage schools

DAPA will be running a summer school for young performers between 4 and 16 August. For more information contact 01306 881488. There will be a Stagecoach "little performers" workshop for four to seven-year-olds between 18 and 22 August, culminating with a final performance at which youngsters can demonstrate their skills to family and friends. 7 - 18-year-olds will enjoy Stagecoach's *Fame* summer school from 18 to 30 August, which will culminate in three performances of the hit musical over 29/30 August. Contact 0208 879 0009 for details of both workshops.

Council mourns "a great servant"

COUNCILLORS have paid warm tribute to former town mayor Alan Lord who died in May. Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Council Leader James Baldwin described Alan as "one of a kind who sought only to serve the town". Among the many other organisations Alan served with distinction were Mid Sussex District Council, Age Concern, Chequer Mead theatre, the Queen Victoria hospital, and the community of Stone Quarry.

"The town has lost a great servant and we are all the poorer for Alan's passing," said James.

Bluebell Railway steaming ahead

STEAMING to East Grinstead, an exhibition marking the impending extension of the Bluebell line into the town railway station, will be at the museum in Cantelupe Road until 2 November. As part of a summer dedicated to celebrating the landmark event, some of the Bluebell's volunteer staff will also be at the museum over the weekend of 5/6 July to talk about their work: while artist and steam train enthusiast Matthew Cousins will be putting on his own exhibition of pictures and prints for sale on 14/15 June and 9/10 August.

Calling all Veterans

A special Veterans' Day service will be held at 11.30am on 19 July in the East Court War Memorial gardens. A short service of thanksgiving for the work and dedication of Britain's armed forces, led by the Rev Clive Everett-Allen, will be followed by refreshments in the Meridian Hall.

Discussions of Core Strategy: building a better local alternative

EAST Grinstead Town Council leader James Baldwin has called a recent "softening" by Mid Sussex District Council in relation to proposals contained in its Core Strategy "very encouraging" and says the town's councillors are responding by working on "a better local alternative".

"MSDC has now recognised that its original Strategy did not engage as actively with local communities as it might have done when it adopted a 'top down' approach to developments within the District between now and 2026," said James.

"So it has been encouraging its three Town Councils, at East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, to make local proposals regarding sustainable developments within their own communities."

At the Town Council's public meeting on the Core Strategy in February, there was discussion about the creation of a new group of Members from all three local Councils to spearhead work on developing a better scheme.

The Group - called the Three Tier Group - has now been formed and includes 11 elected East Grinstead town, district and county councillors. Having now met several times, the Group has agreed clear principles for the way forward:

- * a clear evidence-based approach to underlie all Core Strategy proposals
- * infrastructure provision to match development
- * an holistic approach on the provision of new homes in relation to local jobs, town-centre regeneration and communications links.

James went on: "The Group is now applying these principles in developing alternative proposals on housing and traffic relief to those put forward by MSDC.

"These will start from the premise that MSDC's proposed development of 4,550 new homes by 2026 is excessive and unsustainable, and will go on to outline a better way forward for the town.

"We intend to put our proposals forward for wide public consultation in the early Autumn before they are finalised."

* To keep up with developments in the Core Strategy, check the East Grinstead Town Council website on www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk.

Businesses back baskets

THE record number of East Grinstead businesses sponsoring hanging flower baskets will see the number adorning the town almost double this summer. The town centre's floral displays will be supplemented with extra troughs on railings along Beeching Way, five hanging baskets outside the new facade of East Grinstead Tyres, and another four new baskets outside Sainsbury's.

Three new four-basket stanchions will be installed on the roundabout at the bottom of Blackwell Hollow, and two four-basket stanchions, sponsored by solicitors Allen Ticehurst, opposite the Fire Station.

Several local schools have also caught the 'green' bug with St Peter's, Halsford Park, Baldwins Hill and Sackville all taking part in activities designed to promote biodiversity and local wildlife. "We are always looking for sponsors to improve the environment in East Grinstead, and this summer's sponsorship scheme has met a very generous response from the town's business community," said Council spokesman Martin Duckworth.



In the latest look at the history of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the focus turns to the formation of its heaths and fields.

THE High Weald's rolling hills are draped with small, irregular fields, edged with ancient boundaries and wood banks, often containing flower-rich grassland. Colourful areas of heath - with patches of purple heather and yellow gorse - are found on the high, sandy ridges.

After the Anglo-Saxon period, the practice of driving pigs into the Wealden woods to feed on acorns began to decline and settlers moved into the High Weald in increasing numbers.

As the seasonal woodland pig pastures (dens) gradually changed to permanent places of settlement, the High Weald's first pioneer farmers began clearing the surrounding woods and scrub to make fields. Clearance was done in an unplanned, piecemeal fashion by the individual farmsteads, which is why the High Weald's fields are irregular in shape and relatively small. Field boundaries were simply formed by leaving strips of the original woodland between the fields. By the 14th century the High Weald was settled and the landscape - with its irregular fields, small woods and heathy commons - looked much the same way as it does today. The landscape of the High Weald is essentially medieval, which can be said of few other places in the country. With their heavy clay soils and steep slopes, many High Weald fields have never been ploughed up to grow crops and have traditionally been used for rearing domestic livestock instead.

Compared to many areas of Britain, the AONB still has a relatively large number of ancient, undisturbed, wildflower-rich hay meadows and pastures. These 'unimproved' grasslands are some of our most important habitats for wildlife conservation, supporting up to 100 kinds of grasses and wildflowers - which, in turn, support a great variety of insects and other creatures. Heathlands were first created by clearing and were then maintained by grazing on the poor, sandy soils which occur on the high, sandstone ridges of the High Weald. A prime example, at the very heart of the area, is Ashdown Forest, the largest expanse of open heathland in the South East.

A former Royal hunting forest, Ashdown is the best surviving example of four medieval forests which existed on the AONB's highest sandstone ridge - known as the Weald Forest Ridge - the others being St Leonards, Worth and Broadwater Forests.

In much of England, heaths have disappeared, but the High Weald area remains an important stronghold for this dramatic type of landscape. With their special conditions, heaths support rare and unusual wildlife species, examples of which include the Dartford Warbler and Silver-studded Blue Butterfly.



News in Brief

North East Review

THE West Sussex Primary Healthcare Trust has begun a review of health service provision in the north-east of the county.

The review will consider the state of the public's health, and its access to primary, community and secondary health services, under the chairmanship of Sir Graeme Catto, president of the General Medical Council.

An information meeting about the review, with an opportunity for public contributions, will be held on Friday 11 July, from 7 to 8.30pm at the Meridian Hall, East Grinstead.

Memorial for Air Raid victims

THE Town Council is erecting a permanent memorial to the victims of a German air raid over East Grinstead on 9 July 1943. Bombs dropped on the Whitehall cinema, London Road and the High Street killed 108 people and seriously injured more than 230 others in the worst incident of its kind in Sussex during WW2. There are already stones bearing the initials of the 22 people whose remains lie in a mass grave at Mount Noddy, and the new memorial, which will be erected alongside, will be officially dedicated on the 65th anniversary of the tragedy. Members of the public are welcome to attend a special dedication service in the cemetery at 5pm on 9 July.

French market

THE popular French market will return to the town centre from 9am to 4.30pm on 19 July. Don't forget the weekly Farmers' Market between 9am and 2pm every Thursday in the historic High Street.

The play's the thing

RESIDENTS attending an open meeting to discuss a community theatre event have given the proposed £100,000 project a unanimous and enthusiastic thumbs-up.

The play, which is planned for the summer of 2010, would be written by a professional author with help from the community and performed by a large cast drawn from volunteer actors.

Nick Watson, who has been working on the idea, said he had been inspired by a similar scheme in Groombridge, which had featured a cast of 130 ranging in age from babes-in-arms to octogenarians, with another 100 people giving support backstage.

"It's a great way of bringing the town together, and we hope that it will bring the community spirit back - it's about the history, the heritage and the future of our town," he said.

* To find out more, or to get involved, ring 01892 537034.

East Grinstead Town Council - grants to local organisations

EAST Grinstead Town Council is committed to the success and development of local community and voluntary groups and organisations within the town. In furtherance of this policy the Council operates a Community Grants Fund and grants are considered once annually. A copy of the Council's approved grants criteria and the official application form can be obtained, on request, from the Council Offices at East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT, or downloaded from www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/services/grantaid.php. Applications for grant aid for the current financial year should be submitted on the official form by no later than 10 September 2008, together with a copy of the applicant's latest financial statement and any other supportive information.

DIARY OF FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS 2008

16 Jun	(M)	Planning
19 Jun	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
19 Jun	(Th)	Charities
26 Jun	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
30 Jun	(M)	Planning
07 July	(M)	Council
14 July	(M)	Planning
28 July	(M)	Planning
26 Aug	(T)	Planning
08 Sept	(M)	Planning
11 Sept	(Th)	Public Services
18 Sept	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
18 Sept	(Th)	Charities
22 Sept	(M)	Planning
25 Sept	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
06 Oct	(M)	Council
07 Oct	(T)	Planning
20 Oct	(M)	Planning
03 Nov	(M)	Planning
06 Nov	(Th)	Public Services
13 Nov	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
17 Nov	(M)	Planning
20 Nov	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes

Notes: All meetings are held in the Council Chamber, East Court Mansion, at 7.45 p.m. and are open to the public and press. All full Council meetings include a maximum of 30 minutes set aside at the beginning for public question time. All committee meetings begin with a maximum of 15 minutes for public questions.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

East Grinstead Town Council, East Court	01342 323636
West Sussex County Council Area Highways	01243 642105
East Grinstead Learning Centre	01342 321874
Citizens' Advice Bureau, Cantelupe Road	01342 321638
Library, West Street	01342 410050
Help Point at the Library	01342 300780
Queen Victoria Hospital, Holtye Road	01342 414000
New Downland Housing Association	01444 414429
Kings Leisure Centre, Moat Road	01342 328616
Police Station, East Court	0845 6070999
Mid Sussex District Council	01444 458166
East Grinstead Visitor Information	01342 410121
Samaritans	0845 7909090
Chequer Mead	01342 302000
Museum	01342 302233

HELP!

Services provided by West Sussex County Council, Mid Sussex District Council or East Grinstead Town Council can all be accessed from the Help Point in East Grinstead Library. So if you have a query, or if you are not sure whom to contact, then please drop into the Help Point during opening hours:

Monday	9.30 - 5.30	Thursday	9.30 - 5.30
Tuesday	9.30 - 5.30	Friday	9.30 - 5.30
Wednesday	9.30 - 5.00	Saturday	9.30 - 12.30

Telephone enquiries are welcome on
01342 300780 or by fax on 01342 410262
e mail: east.grinstead.help.point@westsussex.gov.uk



IT'S YOUR COUNCIL.

TELL COUNCILLORS WHAT YOU THINK!

Contact any of the Town Councillors shown in the listing with your views on the items in this edition of *Civic News* or on local issues bothering you, or write to the Council at
East Court Mansion, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT.
For up-to-date information and news about the Town Council visit our website at www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk
e mail: towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR COUNCILLOR

Herontye

Stephen Barnett 10 Woods Hill Close 326001
[LD] A&T, F&GP Ashurst Wood RH19 3RJ

Ian Dixon Chevalhurst, Dunnings Road 317213
[LD] PS, A&T East Grinstead RH19 4AD

Rob Musk Scandia, Hurst Farm Road 313310
[LD] Pl, A&T*, F&GP East Grinstead, RH19 4BL

Town

James Baldwin Scarletts, Sandy Lane 321347
[LD] PS, A&T, F&GP* East Grinstead RH19 3LP

Jim Joyce-Nelson 1 Dexter Drive 314727
[LD] Pl, PS, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 4SU

Virginia Waddingham 11 Beckett Way 326627
[LD] Pl, PS, A&T, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 4SF

Worsted

Margaret Collins, DL Bodinnick, Lewes Road 324296
[LD] PS, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 3UD

Baldwins

Bernard Gillbard 7 Meadowcroft Close 325184
[LD] PS#, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 1NA

Christine Mainstone Mallaig, Windmill Lane 326454
[LD] Pl, A&T# East Grinstead RH19 2DY

Lee Marmara Mill House, The Feld, 301265
[LD] Pl, PS, A&T, F&GP London Rd, East Grinstead RH19 2QL

Ashplats

Liz Bennett 39 Cope Close 301007
[C] PS, A&T East Grinstead, RH19 3EF

Paul Johnson Kingsmere Cottage 311359
[LD] Pl*, PS, F&GP Stoneleigh Close East Grinstead RH19 3DY

Peter Reed 38 Fulmar Drive 311926
[C] Pl, F&GP East Grinstead, RH19 3NN

*Vacancy
until elected 3 July*

Imberhorne

David Banks 29 St Johns Road 312258
[LD] Pl, A&T East Grinstead RH19 3LG

Heidi Brunson 83 Blount Avenue 327200
[LD] Pl, F&GP# East Grinstead, RH19 1JN

Bob Mainstone Mallaig, Windmill Lane 326454
[LD] PS *, A&T, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 2DY

Barry Starmer Kimberley, Pine Grove 300534
[LD] Pl #, A&T East Grinstead RH19 2BB

Indication of Committee: Pl - Planning, PS - Public Services, A&T - Amenities & Tourism, F&GP - Finance & General Purposes *Chairman, # Vice Chairman.

All phone numbers are 01342 and are Councillors' private numbers.
C - Conservative LD - Liberal Democrat

MYFANWY TOWNSEND MELANOMA RESEARCH FUND

One of every fifty people in Britain will suffer from the skin cancer malignant melanoma.

A quarter will die. Incidence is doubling every ten years.
It's the fastest growing cancer in the UK.

We set up the MYFANWY TOWNSEND
MELANOMA RESEARCH FUND, a
Registered Charity (1085969)
(a) to arouse awareness and
(b) to fund research to find a cure

If you want to help us please visit our
website www.melanoma-fund.co.uk:
or e-mail harry@melanoma-fund.co.uk

Wear our green wristbands, donated by Leeds United:
tell people about what we (you) are doing.

